

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) An instant messaging method comprising the steps of:
displaying a user selectable list of subscribers in a graphical user interface of an instant messaging service;
selecting a group of subscribers in an inactive state from the list in the graphical user interface;
designating at least one action associated with the group via the graphical user interface, the at least one designated action to be automatically performed with respect to each subscriber in the group in response to a state change;
automatically detecting a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group; and
automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said at least one subscriber.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said selecting, said designating, said associating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by said instant messaging client.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime (TM) type client.

6-7. (Cancelled).

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said state change is a change from an inactive state to an active state.

9. (Cancelled).

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one action further comprises presenting within a graphical user interface a list of said subscribers in said group and within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said at least one subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

11-37. (Cancelled).

38. (New) A machine-readable storage having stored thereon, a computer program having a plurality of code sections, said code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:

displaying a user selectable list of subscribers in a graphical user interface of an instant messaging service;

selecting a group of subscribers in an inactive state from the list in the graphical user interface;

designating at least one action associated with the group via the graphical user interface, the at least one designated action to be automatically performed with respect to each subscriber in the group in response to a state change;

automatically detecting a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group; and

automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber responsive to said detecting step.

39. (New) The machine-readable storage of claim 38, wherein said action is an instant messaging initiation action that initiates an instant messaging session between said client and said subscriber.

40. (New) The machine-readable storage of claim 38, wherein said action includes at least one action selected from the group consisting of a notification action, a prompting action, and a message conveyance action.

41. (New) The machine-readable storage of claim 38, wherein said selecting, said designating, said detecting, and said executing steps are performed by said instant messaging client.

42. (New) The machine-readable storage of claim 41, wherein said instant messaging client includes a Lotus Sametime.TM. type client.

43. (New) The machine-readable storage of claim 38, said state change is a change

from an inactive state to an active state.

44. (New) The machine-readable storage of claim 38, wherein said at least one action further comprises presenting within a graphical user interface a list of said subscribers in said group and within said graphical user interface, visually distinguishing said at least one subscriber from other subscribers in said list.

45. (New) An instant messaging system comprising:

means for displaying a user selectable list of subscribers in a graphical user interface of an instant messaging service;

means for selecting a group of subscribers in an inactive state from the list in the graphical user interface;

means for designating at least one action associated with the group via the graphical user interface, the at least one designated action to be automatically performed with respect to each subscriber in the group in response to a state change;

means for automatically detecting a state change of at least one of said subscribers in said group; and

means for automatically executing said designated action associated with said group for said at least one subscriber upon the detection of the state change.